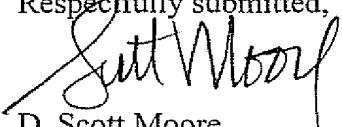


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REMARKS

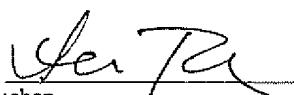
Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the present application as evidenced by the final Office Action of December 21, 2006 (hereinafter "Office Action"). Applicants especially appreciate the indication that Claims 3, 4, 6 - 10, 13, 14, and 16 - 20 recite patentable subject matter. In response Applicants have written allowable dependent Claims 3 and 13 in independent form and have canceled Claims 1, 2, 11, and 12 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants have also amended dependent Claims 5 - 7, 10, 15 - 17, and 20 to correct their dependencies. These amendments are being made to advance prosecution and to facilitate an early allowance of the present application and shall not be construed as acquiescence to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Moreover, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of canceled Claims 1, 2, 11, and 12 in one or more continuing applications. In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-entitled application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (919) 854-1400.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATION OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via the Office electronic filing system in accordance with § 1.6(a)(4) to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on March 19, 2007.

Signature: 
Amelia Tauchen